

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for oxidation of an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent, comprising reacting the aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to oxidize the alkyl substituent into an aldehyde group in a presence of a catalyst ~~containing~~ comprising metal particles of Ag and/or Au supported on a carrier.
2. (Currently amended) The method for oxidation according to claim 1, wherein ~~any~~ one or more ~~kinds of~~ group VIII elements are further supported on the catalyst.
3. (Previously presented) A method for producing an aromatic aldehyde compound, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce the aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 1.
4. (Currently amended) A method for producing an aromatic carboxylic acid ester, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce an aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 1, and then reacting the aromatic aldehyde compound with a primary alcohol to produce the aromatic carboxylic acid ester.
5. (Previously presented) A method for producing an aromatic aldehyde compound, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce the aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 2.
6. (Currently amended) A method for producing an aromatic carboxylic acid ester, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce an aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation

according to claim 2, and then reacting the aromatic aldehyde compound with a primary alcohol to produce the aromatic carboxylic acid ester.

7. (New) The method for oxidation according to claim 2, wherein the catalyst comprises metal particles of Ag and/or Au and metal particles comprising one or more group VIII elements separately supported on a carrier, or metal particles comprising an alloy or an intermetallic compound of Ag and/or Au and one or more group VIII elements supported on a carrier.

8. (New) A method for producing an aromatic aldehyde compound, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce the aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 7.

9. (New) A method for producing an aromatic carboxylic acid ester, comprising reacting an aromatic compound having an alkyl substituent with an oxygen molecule to produce an aromatic aldehyde compound by the method for oxidation according to claim 7, and then reacting the aromatic aldehyde compound with a primary alcohol to produce the aromatic carboxylic acid ester.